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but Dr. Kraushar does not attach much value to the account of Frank given by this historian. He taxes him with ignorance of the Polish sources. He frequently commits solecisms in the citation of Polish names. Moreover, he lacks the proper objective spirit of the historian, as shown in the abuse which he continually heaps upon Frank. These remarks apply, not only to the mention of Frank in the *Geschichte der Juden*, but also to the work of Graetz, entitled, *Frank und die Frankisten* (1868).

W. R. MORFILL.

MEDIAEVAL JEWISH CHRONICLES.

Mediaeval Jewish Chronicles and Chronological Notes, ed. by A. NEUBAUER.
(Oxford: Clarendon Press.) 1887-1895. Parts I-II.

DR. NEUBAUER'S unabated zeal in his useful labours in the field of Hebrew Literature, which he successfully continues in spite of physical suffering, has enabled him to complete the collection of Mediaeval Jewish Chronicles, the first instalment of which appeared in 1887. Students of Jewish History and Hebrew Literature must welcome the work as a valuable treasure that contains a rich supply of desirable information. It is owing to Dr. Neubauer's genius and inexhaustible store of knowledge, in addition to the opportunities, which all have who live in an institution like the Bodleian Library, that the collection is as complete and as perfect as possible. The numerous various readings from different manuscripts and editions, contained in the footnotes, and the many supplementary extracts from different works, give evidence of the immense labour bestowed on this work by the editor. How conscientiously Dr. Neubauer works, and what difficulties the deciphering of the MSS., frequently illegible, involves, can best be seen by the Additions and Corrections of pp. 252 to 255. Each volume contains a brief literary account of the various treatises it includes, and at the end of the second volume a complete Index for the whole work has been added. In these two volumes Dr. Neubauer includes thirteen different treatises, seven of which are edited here for the first time. We will consider them seriatim.

(Part II, p. 3.) *Megillath-taanith*, "Scroll of Fasting," deserves the first place as the oldest of these Chronicles. It contains two different elements, the original scroll in Aramaic, and the Commentary on it in Hebrew of a much later date. The title is apparently chosen after the manner of *lucus a non lucendo*; for the scroll enumerates only the days on which fasting may not take place. Such a name is

a strange phenomenon in Hebrew literature; only on account of euphemism we meet with the title *toharoth* "Purities," instead of "Impurities"; *semaḥoth* "Rejoicings," instead of "Mourning." In the title "Scroll of Fasting," we have just the reverse of euphemism. I therefore beg to differ from Dr. Neubauer, who calls the Appendix, containing a list of fast-days, "a later addition"; it is more probable that this list, including perhaps later interpolations, formed an essential part in the original plan. This theory is confirmed by the following passage: "Who wrote the Scroll of Fasting? The school of Rabbi Eliezer, son of Hananiah, son of Hizkiah, son of Gorion. Why did they write it?" i. e. why did they commemorate the various events, and why do we not do the same? "Because they were not accustomed to *troubles*," i. e. when troubles came it was a memorable event, "but we are accustomed to them," they are an everyday's occurrence. The *troubles* (*tsaroth*) are the principal subject of the *megillah*, and not the *deliverance*, the cause of *not* fasting on certain days. The reading of the Talmud favours still more this theory. "They wrote it because they loved the troubles," *scil.* as opportunities for evincing their cheerful submission to the will of God (comp. Talm. B. Berachoth, 5 b), whereupon R. Jochanan: "We also love them, but they are too many to be written down." To the *variae lectiones*, contained in the notes, I should like to add an important one: p. 12, the word *adrachta* occurs according to the Amst. edition of 1711 and the MSS. consulted by the editor. *Adrachta* signifies "warrant for distress," which is entirely out of question here. The correct reading is found in the edition Jacob Emden, and in the Talmud, *viz.* *adcharta*, "the name of God."

(Part II, p. 26.) *Seder Olam*, a Chronology from Adam to Ben-Cosiba (i. e. Bar Coch'ba). The book may be divided into two unequal parts: the Biblical and Postbiblical Chronology; the latter begins with the commencement of the Era of the Greeks (minyan Yevanim). The transition from the one part to the other is formed by the following sentence: "Up to here we have the authority of the prophets who were inspired with the holy spirit; as regards that which follows 'incline thine ear and listen to the words of the Sages.'" The Era of the Greeks was, according to the *Seder Olam*, common among the Jews in the diaspora in all legal documents (*shetaroth*), but in other respects he suggests to count the years from the destruction of the Temple. It is remarkable that whilst the author gives full details of the history of the destruction of the first Temple, and of the events narrated in the books of Ezekiel, Daniel, Esther, Ezra, and Nehemiah, he contents himself with giving a bare outline of the chronology of the second Temple, and does not mention any details of the history of

the Maccabees, or of the Roman period. The dates and facts which are given of the postbiblical time are those which occur in the Talmud¹ in the name of Rabbi Jose, in the very same expressions. It is therefore to this Tanna Rabbi Jose that tradition assigns the authorship of the *Seder Olam*². There is nothing in the book that contradicts this tradition. Three different dates of a later period are found in the text; 1000 Sel. era (printed ed.); 782 after the destruction of the second Temple (MS. Opp. 317) and 1117 Sel. (MS. Halberstamm). As these dates have no reference whatever to the text, they are later additions by copyists who wanted to illustrate the text by the date of their own times. Succeeding copyists treated these additions as integral parts of the text.

The book contains thirty chapters, divided into three sections; the first two are called *baba kamma*, "first section," *baba metsiatha*, "the middle section"; but the name for the last section, which would accordingly be *baba bathra*, is not found in any of the editions or manuscripts collated by Neubauer. Of these thirty chapters, two are identical, namely, ch. V and ch. XXI; the variations in the text are insignificant, and not one of them essential. It is strange that in the ed. Neubauer the *first* of these chapters is introduced as *baba tinyana*, "second part." The Amsterdam edition has this chapter only once. On the whole, we find that the variations registered in the notes, or added in the text, are not essential; they are mostly clerical errors, and the reader will easily distinguish the reading which is that of the author, from the errors of the copyists. Two instances may suffice: (p. 27) According to one text Rebecca was three, according to another four, and according to a third reading fourteen years old, when married to Isaac. From the clear statement in the text, that Isaac was thirty-seven years old when laid upon the altar; that at the same time Sarah died and Rebecca was born; *it follows*, that Rebecca was three years old when Isaac, forty years old, married her. The number three is the correct number; the numbers fourteen or four may have the authority of a certain tradition³, but are out of place here. (p. 42) The Israelites commenced to count the years of *shemitah* and jubilee fourteen years after their entry into the land of Canaan; for 850 years they dwelt in the land, that is, seventeen complete jubilees; and so we read in Ezekiel xl. 1, "in the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the fourteenth year after the fall of the city"; how, then, was it that

¹ Comp. Babyl. T. Shabbath, p. 15 a; Abodah Zarah, 9 a.

² Comp. *Tanya de Seder Olam Rabba*, in the Postscript, p. 67.

³ Comp. Rashi on Gen. xxv. 26.

a Jubilee year was *fourteen* years later? Because they commenced to count fourteen years after the entry. The number fourteen, as in the Amsterdam edition, is the only correct number; the number which the Neubauer edition has, according to MS. Opp. 317, is decidedly wrong. Dr. Neubauer describes the printed edition as Hispanico-Eastern text, and traces the text of MS. Opp. 317 to the Franco-Germanic school. But on examining the variations in the two texts, I am unable to discover any instance that could be considered as characteristic of a particular school. Noteworthy is the author's interpretation of Isaiah xix. 19: when Sennacherib's army was destroyed before Jerusalem, there were left his captives from Egypt and other countries; these fell into the hands of Hezekiah, and, set at liberty by him, they returned home as true worshippers of God and built "the altar to the Lord in the land of Egypt."

This *Seder Olam*, as the larger one (*rabba*), is followed (p. 68) by a smaller one, *Seder Olam Zuta*. It contains the names and dates of the generations from Adam to king Jehoiakim, with the names of the high priests and prophets of each generation from king David to the destruction of the Temple by the Babylonians; thirty-nine generations are then enumerated from the last king of Judah to Mar Zutra, the names given are the heads of the exile, and the Sages that guided them. It was probably compiled in the eighth century, and was intended to establish the Davidic descent of the Heads of the Exiles (*rashe-golah*). No *variae lectiones* accompany the text, but instead, two different texts are added: the text of the *Yohasin*, headed "The family of the Head of the Exile in Babylon," and "A Chronicle from Adam to the Gaon Saadia," according to the first edition of the *Yohasin*. They contain varied and valuable information concerning the Babylonian schools of Sura and Pumboditha. There is one interesting event mentioned briefly in *Seder Olam Zuta* (p. 73); namely, that Mar Zutra, after a successful war against the Persians, established in Babylon a Jewish independent State; which, however, again lost its independence after seven years. It would have been interesting to find in some of the various texts, some more details of the history of the Jewish State during this short period. But if Dr. Neubauer could not discover anything more about it, we may fairly assume that nothing more is extant. Two other treatises named *Seder Olam* are included in the first part of this Collection (pp. 161 and 176). One of these, written by Yerahmeel in the eleventh century, contains the history of the Tradition; the names of the high priests of both Temples, the history of the Jews during the second Temple, and an outline of Talmud and Bible. The other, the full title of which is *Seder Olam Zuta veseder Tenaim*

ve-emoraim, is described by Dr. Neubauer (I, xxi, note 4) as epitomized from the *Seder Olam Zuta* and *Rabba*, and *Seder Tenaim ve-emoraim*; it was finished on the 15th of Ellul, 1044, by the same author.

(Part I, p. 3.) *A letter of the Gaon Sherira (Iggereth Rabbenu Sherira Gaon)*. Questions were addressed by R. Jacob b. Nissim of Kairowan concerning the composition of the Mishnah, the Talmud, the Tosefta, the Sifra and the Sifre, and the chronology of the Saburaeans and of the Geonim. The author fully discusses all the questions addressed to him. Enumerating these problems (Part I, p. viii), Dr. Neubauer says, "And chiefly whether the Mishnah was orally transmitted to the doctors of the Talmud or if it was written down by the compiler himself," adding in surprise, "an advanced question for such an early period." Our surprise, however, is gone, as soon as we formulate the question more in accordance with the text: Did Rabbi compile the Mishnah from written documents or from oral communications? The question whether Rabbi wrote down the Mishnah which he compiled, or whether the Mishnah was transmitted orally for some time after Rabbi, is likewise discussed in this letter. But we must leave the further consideration of this problem, and other problems connected with this letter and with the *Sefer hakkabbalah* of R. Abraham b. David, for another occasion. We only add that the valuable notes, extracts, and fragments added by the editor will be of great help to the historian who will attempt to find his way through the labyrinth of names and dates contained in these historical documents. A continuation of the *Sefer hakkabbalah* by R. Abraham b. Shelomoh is included in the Chronicles of Part I (p. 101), edited from a MS. in the Bodleian Library.

(Part II, p. 89.) An Arabic chronicle from the creation to 1159, edited for the first time from two MSS. in the Bodleian Library, has especial interest for the rendering of the geographical names in the Bible. According to the editor, the anonymous author mostly agrees with the Gaon Saadia in his Commentaries, and he considers it possible that the author made use of a chronological treatise of the Gaon, mentioned in Judah b. Bileam's Commentary on the first prophets (Part II, p. xi). The Chronicle is divided into seven chapters. The first five chapters contain the Biblical history of the Israelites according to the Bible, with Midrashic interpretation now and then, whilst the last two chapters are devoted to the chronology of the Postbiblical history up to 1159.

(Part I, p. 85.) Another Chronicle from the creation to 1467, edited from a Bodleian MS., forms the fiftieth chapter of *Zeher Tsaddik*, a ritual work, written by Joseph b. Tsaddik of Arevalo in Spain. "It is probable that Joseph b. Tsaddik and Abraham Zakkuth (in his

Yohasin) made use of one and the same chronicle, which both continued up to their time" (Part I, p. xiv). Of great importance for the study of the history of the Jews in the Middle Ages, especially of the Jews in the East, are the extracts from the historical work, *Dibre Joseph*, by R. Joseph b. Yitsḥak Sambary, which was finished in Alexandria. The importance of the work may be inferred from the fact that Dr. A. Berliner had it reprinted in a small edition as the first volume of his *Quellenschriften zur jüdischen Geschichte u. Literatur*. It is perhaps to be regretted that Dr. Neubauer chose to give only extracts, instead of editing the complete work; passages not interesting to *A* may be welcomed by *B* as important information. As a rule, however, the editor of these chronicles has a sound judgment on such matters. The reader will find in these extracts interesting and amusing tales about the Jews in Egypt, about Abraham Ibn Ezra, Maimonides, David Alroy, &c. The book concludes with the complaint and the hope, which are not uncommon in the present age: After them (i. e. the learned men mentioned before) the study of the Torah decreased in the present generation; may the Lord send Messiah, and may be fulfilled the word "and all thy children shall be taught of the Lord."

(Part II, p. 111.) *Sefer Yohasin*, "The Book of Genealogy," is a family chronicle written by Ahimaaz, with a postscript, giving briefly the names and dates of the successive generations, by Menahem son of R. Benjamin, in the year 1055. Incidentally it contains also information about the Jews in the South of Italy, about the invasion of the Saracens in the year 872, and the like. An amusing tale is told about R. Silano, the interpreter (Meturgeman) of the Haham of the congregation, who had recently come from Palestine to that place. There was once a riot in the streets, which R. Silano described in a few rhymes. He then got hold of the lecture prepared by the Haham for next Sabbath, erased a line or two, and inserted his rhymes. The poor lecturer was puzzled, and hesitatingly read the rhymes. R. Silano at once interpreted them as referring to the riot which had taken place the previous day. Silano was excommunicated, but through the interference of R. Ahimaaz the *herem* was cancelled. The book is edited from a unique MS. preserved in the Cathedral Library of Madrid. I doubt whether the MS. is the original copy of the author; there are errors that can only come from a thoughtless copyist, e. g. p. 115, l. 19, סילנו ר' בירנונים באחד שוויה ר' ערך רינונים ואחד שעשה ר' סילנו.

(Part II, p. 133.) The diary of David Reubeni, who describes himself as follows: David, son of king Solomon, and younger brother of king Joseph, who rules in the desert of Habor over three hundred

thousand people of the tribes of Gad and Reuben, and half the tribe of Menasseh. This king Joseph sent his brother David to Rome to transact important business with the Pope. The travels from Habor to Rome are minutely described in this Hebrew diary. The Hebrew is by no means elegant. A few of its peculiarities may here be noticed: **אחד סום** “one horse”; **זה האיש** “this man”; **יש לי** “I had”; **הוא** “he was”; and the use of the preposition **מן** “from,” instead of the construct state. The history of the MS. of this diary is unique, as the MS. itself is unique. It was acquired by the Bodleian Library in the year 1848, since 1867 it has been missing. Fortunately, however, a facsimile had been made of the MS., which occupies now the place of the original. From this facsimile the present edition of the diary has been printed.

In conclusion, I call attention to a peculiar benediction (ברכה) which Dr. Neubauer copied (Part II, p. xiv) from MS. Gaster, No. 83, headed “Benediction referring to the words of our Sages” **ברכתא** and **ב' התורה ז' ל'**; it is a kind of complement to the **אשר בחר** and **ב' חכמים ז'**. After the usual introduction it continues: **ב' חכמים ז' בצדיקים ז' ומסר להן רז' חכמה ונתן להן תורה הוא ברחמיו הרבבים יוכה אותן כל מדה טובה ללימוד וללמוד לשמר ולעשות בזאת נזון תורה :** “May he who chose the Sages and the Righteous, who delivered unto them the secrets of wisdom, and gave them knowledge of the Torah, grant us in his abundant mercy, that we be able, in every branch of the study of the Law, to learn, to teach, to keep, and to do.”

M. FRIEDLÄNDER.